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# VIRUS

people who live in the communities that surround campuses. Most university officials are working with law-enforcement agencies to enforce social-distancing guidelines.

## STATE LEADERSHIP KEEPS HANDS OFF

But the state has no plans to help universities crack down on large gatherings and non-compliance in college towns.

“Of course we would like to see university students behave more responsibly, but the state will not utilize valuable resources to serve as an enforcer to prohibit young people, who clearly want to and will continue to socialize, from doing so,” DeSantis’ spokesman, Cody McCloud, said in a statement to the Herald/Times.

The governor’s office added that young adults aged 18 to 22 are at “an extremely low risk of getting sick or being hospitalized from COVID-19,” a message that he has repeated numerous times as he pushed schools and universities to reopen in the fall.

It is that message that has prompted some university students to let their guards down in social situations.

“That narrative that young healthy people aren’t going to be affected was a huge driving factor” to return to campus and hang out with a group of friends indoors, Martin said.

Natasha Harwood, an 18-year-old freshman at FSU, added that the state’s lifting of restrictions on bars is sending mixed signals to students. She said the decision to allow bars to reopen at 50% capacity earlier this month is “almost like you have the government behind

you to keep going out and keep being social.”

“I think what the governor realized was that people are going to hang out anyway and they are going to party anyway,” Harwood said. “I think at this point, it’s more of a money thing, where you might as well open up and help the local economy because they’re testing positive.”

When asked about the students’ perspective, the governor’s office said, “students are taking that calculated risk into consideration when making decisions, and they are personally responsible for their actions.”

## PROTOCOLS AT UF, FSU

Most state universities required students to get tested for the virus prior to settling into their dorm rooms.

At FSU, all students living off campus and employees were “strongly encouraged” to undergo testing if they planned to be present on campus. At least 1,402 students and 26 employees are known to have tested positive for the virus at FSU as of Monday.

UF’s testing plan includes mandatory testing for all students who are asymptomatic or are in contact with patients in a clinical setting.

Universities have set aside rooms where students can stay if ordered to isolate due to a positive diagnosis.

UF officials say students are provided “food, sundries, counseling and other services as needed” when isolating.

FSU has set aside 80 beds for residential students who test positive for COVID-19.

Harwood, whose roommate tested positive for the virus and was quarantined last week, said FSU is very strict about restricting students’ access outside of their isolation rooms.

Meanwhile, counties with major universities,



JOE BURBANK Orlando Sentinel/TNS, file 2020

Most university officials are working with police to enforce social-distancing guidelines.

such as FSU, the University of South Florida, the University of Florida and the University of Central Florida, reported on Monday that a large chunk of new cases stem from people who are between the ages of 15 and 24.

On Monday, for example, 67% of new cases in Alachua County, home to UF, fell under that age group. In Leon County, where FSU and Florida A&M are located, 53% of the county’s new cases were also people in that age group.

Syd Kitson, the chairman of the state university system’s Board of Governors, said last week the uptick in coronavirus cases on some campuses is a reminder that “the pandemic is far from over,” and urged state officials to hammer to students the message of “personal responsibility.”

FSU President John Thrasher on Friday sent a campus-wide email in which he once again threatened to suspend students who defied COVID-19 measures. He also said students would be suspended for at least one semester if they are caught socializing after testing positive and ordered to isolate.

Martin said that when he tested positive for the deadly illness, he stayed

home and a headache was the worst symptom he experienced. But some of his friends, he said, tested positive and ventured out to pool parties and the gym, Martin said.

As of Monday, the infection rate on FSU’s campus is 8%. The state’s positivity was reported at 5.88% on Tuesday.

FSU spokeswoman Amy Farum Patronis said at least 46 students have been charged with student-conduct violations but would not say how many of those students have been suspended.

## OFF-CAMPUS BEHAVIOR IN GAINESVILLE

At the University of Florida in Gainesville, Gomez said she has regularly witnessed clusters of maskless students in Midtown, an area with bars and restaurants just north of campus.

“No one seems to be taking it seriously from what I see every night across the street,” Gomez said. “It seems just as busy as any other fall here at UF.”

Gomez returned to campus but is not taking in-person classes. She wanted to come back to campus because she could not concentrate on her studies as clearly when at home

with her family. She fears getting sick, so she is not going out and socializing.

“I will say it is very lonely,” the 21-year-old said. “And I had not considered that.”

Another cornerstone of the college experience, sports, has been a point of contention as sports resumed this month. It is something the Republican governor has strongly pushed to resume in the fall.

“Not just football, which

is very important in the state of Florida, but all of our men’s and women’s sports,” the governor said Aug. 2. “These students work their whole lives to be able to get to this point and they shouldn’t have their season taken away from them.”

Major universities like USF, UCF and FSU have already started the football season. The Seminoles play the University of Miami this Saturday at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, but UM is not allowing students to attend.

FSU’s first football game caused outrage when images of maskless fans and a crowded stadium popped up on social media, prompting university officials to say new guidelines would be forthcoming.

Most recently, Florida Atlantic University on Saturday canceled its season-opening game against Georgia Southern in the wake of a COVID-19 outbreak that was reported among the Owls’ football team.

Miami Herald writer Karina Elwood contributed to this report.

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**NOTICE OF PROPOSED TAX INCREASE**

The Village of Biscayne Park has tentatively adopted a measure to increase its property tax levy.

**Last year’s property tax levy:**

A. Initially proposed tax levy..... **\$ 2,242,655**

B. Less tax reductions due to Value Adjustment Board and other assessment changes ..... **\$ 13,078**

C. Actual property tax levy ..... **\$ 2,229,577**

This year’s proposed tax levy ..... **\$ 2,418,095**

All concerned citizens are invited to attend a public hearing on the tax increase to be held on:

**Tuesday, September 29, 2020**

**6:30pm**

**Via Zoom**

**Meeting ID: 910 0114 7962**

**Biscayne Park, Florida**

**A FINAL DECISION on the proposed tax increase and the budget will be made at this hearing.**

BUDGET SUMMARY				
Village of Biscayne Park, Florida - October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021				
THE PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET EXPENDITURES OF BISCAYNE PARK, FL ARE 7.9% MORE THAN LAST YEAR’S TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES				
ESTIMATED REVENUES:	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUE FUND	ENTERPRIS E FUND	TOTAL ALL FUNDS
Taxes: <b>Millage per \$1,000</b>				
Ad Valorem Taxes <b>9.7000</b>	2,418,095	-	-	2,418,095
Sales and Use Taxes	279,000	-	-	279,000
Intergovernmental Revenue	330,221	168,944	-	499,165
Charges for Services	128,100	-	593,750	721,850
Judgments, Fines & Forfeitures	18,000	-	-	18,000
Contributions and Grants	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Revenues	13,000	1,000	3,410	17,410
Carryforward Surplus	-	52,500	-	52,500
<b>TOTAL SOURCES</b>	<b>3,186,416</b>	<b>222,444</b>	<b>597,160</b>	<b>4,006,020</b>
Transfers In	67,344	24,399	-	91,743
<b>TOTAL REVENUES, TRANSFERS &amp; BALANCES</b>	<b>3,253,760</b>	<b>246,843</b>	<b>597,160</b>	<b>4,097,763</b>
ESTIMATED APPROPRIATIONS				
General Government	927,160	-	-	927,160
Public Safety	1,453,601	-	-	1,453,601
Physical Environment	657,928	105,779	486,811	1,250,518
Transportation	-	167,500	-	167,500
Culture and Recreation	202,024	-	-	202,024
Other Uses	-	-	-	-
Other Non-Operating	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>3,240,713</b>	<b>273,279</b>	<b>486,811</b>	<b>4,000,803</b>
OTHER FINANCING USES				
Transfers Out (Reserves)	13,047	(26,436)	110,348	96,959
<b>TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS, TRANSFERS, RESERVES &amp; BALANCES</b>	<b>3,253,760</b>	<b>246,843</b>	<b>597,160</b>	<b>4,097,763</b>
The tentative adopted and / or final budgets are on file in the office of the above referenced taxing authority as a public record.				